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MEDIA CLIPS – April 13, 2018

**LeMahieu's big night: 2 homers, 4 RBIs in win**  
Bettis allows 1 run, strikes out 5 in 7 innings

Joshua Needelman/ MLB.com | Apr. 12, 2018

WASHINGTON -- **DJ LeMahieu** has won Gold Glove Awards and earned All-Star Game selections, but never in the second baseman's eight-year career had he recorded four RBIs in a single game. That is, before Thursday night at Nationals Park.

LeMahieu kicked off the Rockies' 5-1 win over the Nationals with the first leadoff home run of his career, before knocking in another run with a double in the second inning. Then, in the sixth, LeMahieu went deep once more, crushing the first pitch he saw from **Matt Grace** into the center-field seats to put the Rockies ahead for good. He doubled again in the top of the ninth with no runners on base.

"I feel like I've seen **Nolan Arenado** and **Charlie Blackmon** and **Carlos Gonzalez** have those kind of games plenty of times. So, it was good to have one those for sure," LeMahieu said.

LeMahieu finished 4-for-5 with four RBIs and two runs scored, emerging as the star in the first outing of a four-game set. Things will get harder for Colorado as the series wears on, with stud right-handers **Max Scherzer** and **Stephen Strasburg** scheduled to start Saturday and Sunday. But on Thursday, LeMahieu and the Rockies had their way with left-hander **Gio Gonzalez**, who departed after five innings.

Rockies right-hander **Chad Bettis** turned in the most impressive start of the young season, surrendering one earned run on three hits and two walks against five strikeouts in seven innings. **Howie Kendrick's** fifth-inning solo blast represented Washington's lone offense.

"I thought he pitched well. Fastball, changeup, looked pretty good. He was mixing it up pretty well tonight and sometimes that's going to happen," **Bryce Harper** said of Bettis.

"He pitched great. Just pounding the zone. Hitting spots, working quick. Chad doing Chad things, for sure," LeMahieu said.

Right-hander **Bryan Shaw** and left-hander **Jake McGee** combined to pitch a scoreless eighth and ninth inning, respectively, sealing the win for the Rockies.

## **MOMENTS THAT MATTERED**

**Popup gone wrong:** Washington cheered center fielder **Ian Desmond** in his first plate appearance of the evening, a show of respect for his seven years as a Nationals player. The result of his at-bat didn't elicit the same type of warm reaction. Desmond hit a weak popup to Kendrick, who misplayed the ball, allowing it to drop harmlessly to the right-field grass. The two-out gaffe not only extended the inning, but allowed **Chris Iannetta** to score, giving Colorado a 2-0 advantage before Washington even got a crack at the batter's box.

## **HE SAID IT**

"You could say that he was our offense." -- *Rockies manager Bud Black, on LeMahieu*

## **UP NEXT**

Left-hander **Kyle Freeland** (0-2, 5.56 ERA) takes the mound for the Rockies in the second game of a four-game series against the Nationals, starting at 5:05 p.m. MT Friday. Freeland pitched well last time out, allowing three earned runs in six innings against the Braves, but had no run support and received the loss. **Tanner Roark** (1-0, 4.50 ERA) gets the start for the Nationals.

## Rockies await word on possible suspensions

Joshua Needelman/ MLB.com | Apr. 12, 2018

WASHINGTON -- As the Rockies await word of possible suspensions for a benches-clearing fracas Wednesday afternoon against the Padres, Colorado manager Bud Black said such incidents can serve as galvanizing moments for teams -- but players shouldn't need brawls for an extra spark.

"What you try to do as a team is to have that emotion all the time, even though it might not be outwardly shown," Black said. "From my perspective, and the coaches' and players', we try to keep that level [of] competitiveness at a pretty high pitch as we move through our day, everyday."

The altercation was sparked by Padres right-hander **Luis Perdomo** hurling a fastball behind third baseman **Nolan Arenado's** head. Arenado promptly charged the mound, chucking his helmet to the ground and dodging Perdomo's airborne glove, and unloaded some punches. The benches cleared and relievers ran in from the bullpen, some to help curb the altercation and others to participate in it.

Perdomo and Arenado were both ejected. So was Padres catcher **A.J. Ellis** and the Rockies' **German Marquez** and **Gerardo Parra**. Major League Baseball has yet to hand down suspensions, a process that Black acknowledged could take some time.

"There's some deliberation from the Commissioner's Office. They review tape, they ask questions, they talk to a lot of different parties involved, and they come to a conclusion," Black said.

### Worth noting

Black said **Charlie Blackmon's** status is improving, but the center fielder remained out of the lineup Thursday for the Rockies' series opener against the Nationals. Blackmon didn't play in the final two games of the San Diego series due to right quad tightness.

## DJ LeMahieu's career night lifts Rockies to road win over Nationals

LeMahieu became the third player in Rockies history to record at least two doubles and two home runs in the same game

Patrick Saunders / The Denver Post | Apr. 13, 2018

WASHINGTON — The only thing missing was the gnarly beard and mullet-like hairdo.

In other words, Rockies second basemen **DJ LeMahieu** was downright “Nazty” from the leadoff spot Thursday night in the Rockies’ 5-1 victory over the Nationals.

LeMahieu, filling in for his injured buddy, Charlie “Chuck Nazty” Blackmon, produced the second two-home run game of his career, hit two doubles and also drove in a career-high four runs. He batted 4-for-5, raising his average to .351.

“I just went out there and tried to hit the ball hard,” LeMahieu said. “It seems like I’ve seen Nolan (Arenado) and Charlie (Blackmon) and CarGo (Carlos Gonzalez) have those kinds of games plenty of times. So it feels good to have one of those games, for sure.”

LeMahieu has already launched four homers this season. He didn’t reach that mark until July 7 last season.

Colorado’s win rested on one of the best starts of **Chad Bettis**’ career. The veteran right-hander pitched seven innings, allowing one run on just three hits. He walked two and fanned five, including two punch-outs of Washington slugger Bryce Harper.

Setup man Bryan Shaw pitched a scoreless eighth, allowing one hit. Lefty Jake McGee pitched a perfect ninth.

LeMahieu had a blast right from the start, ambushing a 90 mph, 1-1 fastball by left-hander Gio Gonzalez and sending the ball to deep left field. It was the first time LeMahieu has ever led off a game with a homer.

His second homer was a two-out, two-run rocket in the sixth off left-hander Mark Grace, putting the Rockies ahead 5-1.

He also rapped an RBI double in the second to score **Gerardo Parra**, and added a leadoff double in the ninth, but was stranded.

LeMahieu became the third player in Rockies history to record at least two doubles and two home runs in the same game.

The others were **Corey Dickerson** (May 10, 2014 at Cincinnati) and Todd Walker (June 25, 2011 vs. the Padres).

The Rockies were coming off a lackluster 2-4 homestand and facing a seven-game road trip against the pitching-rich Nationals, but LeMahieu provided the offensive spark they needed.

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### Looking ahead

**Rockies LHP Kyle Freeland** (0-2, 5.56 ERA) at **Nationals RHP Tanner Roark** (1-0, 4.50), 5:05 p.m. Friday; ATTRM, 850 AM

Toss back the homers, and Freeland has pitched pretty well in his first two starts. Trouble is, you can't discount those long balls and they have really hurt the Denver native. He served up two homers in each start, hence his high ERA and two losses. He earned a win at Nationals Park on July 30 last season, allowing four runs (three earned) on nine hits — including two homers — in five innings of work. Roark is the relative weak link in the Nationals' formidable starting rotation. He allowed five runs on five hits and four walks — but with nine strikeouts — in five innings in a 6-5 loss to the Mets on Sunday. In three games (two starts) vs. the Rockies, he's 1-1 with a 4.91 ERA.

**Saturday:** Rockies RHP Jon Gray (1-2, 5.63 ERA) at Nationals RHP Max Scherzer (2-1, 0.90), 11:05 a.m., ATTRM

**Sunday:** Rockies LHP Tyler Anderson (0-0, 5.65) at Nationals RHP Stephen Strasburg (2-1, 2.21), 11:35 a.m., ATTRM

**Monday:** Rockies RHP German Marquez (0-1, 4.97) at Pirates Steven Brault (2-0, 3.46), 5:05 p.m., ATTRM

## **Chad Bettis' retro pitching style getting job done for the Rockies**

"Chad is a student of the game," veteran catcher Chris Iannetta said. "He has a game plan and he executes it."

**Patrick Saunders / The Denver Post | Apr. 12, 2018**

WASHINGTON — When Chad Bettis is on his game, he's like, you know, a totally radical pitcher with a gnarly changeup, for sure.

"Chad Bettis, you could say, is a pitcher who pitched back in my era," manager Bud Black said before the Rockies' 5-1 victory over the Nationals on Thursday night.

Black's era, in case you haven't guessed, was mostly in the 1980s, when a blinding fastball was not a prerequisite for big-league success.

"In my era, you saw a lot more pitchers who really had to change speeds and move the ball around," Black continued. "In my era, there wasn't the overpowering velocity and stuff that you see now. You had pitchers who truly needed to disrupt timing and move the ball, in and out and up and down. They tried to get the ball off the center of the bat."

Bettis, making his third start of the season, was superb, pitching seven innings, allowing one run on three hits with five strikeouts and only two walks. He improved to 2-0 and whittled his ERA to 2.04.

Bettis, 28, has become a craftsman.

"It's nice to be referred as that," he said. "That's kind of how I pitch. I don't have the 95 or 97 fastball anymore, so you have to work around that. Command is a big part of my game and tonight it was good."

He struck out Washington leadoff hitter Trea Turner with an 85 mph changeup in the first inning, and then utilized an 84 mph slider to get Howie Kendrick to hit into a groundball double play to end the second.

He set up perennial National League MVP candidate Bryce Harper with a 72 mph curveball, then struck him out with an 84 mph change to end a one-two-three fourth inning. He whiffed Harper again in the sixth, this time on an 88 mph change.

Bettis survived a rough fifth inning, when it appeared that the Nationals were beginning to time him up. Kendrick hit a two-out, solo blast to deep center on a hanging changeup, then Bettis walked Matt Weiters, and then served up a double to deep center to pinch-hitter Moises Sierra. But he induced Michael Taylor to chop out to third baseman Nolan Arenado to limit the damage.

Bettis' top fastball velocity was just 91 mph, slow by contemporary standards, but it didn't matter much on this night.

"Chad is a student of the game," veteran catcher Chris Iannetta said. "He has a game plan and he executes it."

Jon Gray, who slings his fastball to the plate at 95-98 mph, throws a hard slider at 89-90 mph and can drop in a big-bending curveball, has better pure "stuff" than Bettis, but the results this season have not been better.

Gray, who is close friends with Bettis, admires Bettis as a “thinking man’s pitcher.”

“It’s all about his game planning and execution,” Gray said. “He’s very detailed on his plan. He knows what he wants to do, but he’s not predictable.”

Moreover, Gray said, Bettis can modify his blueprint during a game, something the younger Rockies pitchers continue to struggle with.

“Chad has a an A, B, and a C game plan and he’s able to adjust,” Gray said. “That’s what sticks out for me.”

**Blackmon update.** Center fielder Charlie Blackmon was out of the starting lineup for the third consecutive game because of tightness in his right quadriceps. However, a trip to the 10-day disabled list looks unlikely. Both Black and head athletic trainer Keith Dugger both said that Blackmon was much improved.

Ian Desmond, who played in 927 games for the Nationals, second-most in franchise history, made the start in center field.

**Dahl watch.** Outfielder David Dahl won’t be getting called up from Triple-A Albuquerque anytime soon. The fan favorite is on the seven-day disabled list with what the club is calling “an illness.”

After making a big splash as a rookie in 2016, Dahl played in only a few minor-league games last season, and played in no major-league games, as he recovered from a stress-reaction injury to a rib in the upper-back area.

## **The Morning After: What happens when Rockies' Nolan Arenado is suspended?**

Shortstop Trevor Story continues to strike out at an alarming rate

**Patrick Saunders / The Denver Post | Apr. 12, 2018**

WASHINGTON — Rockies all-star third baseman **Nolan Arenado** could discover his fate as soon as Friday.

He expects to be suspended for his central role in the brawl between the Rockies and Padres on Wednesday. When all is said and done, and after the appeals have been handled by Joe Torre and his staff at Major League Baseball, Arenado could be suspended for four or even five games. We'll see what happens.

So what will the Rockies do in his absence? Remember, a team can't simply call up a player from the minors to fill Arenado's spot on the 25-man roster. Colorado will be a player short while he sits.

Rookie Ryan McMahon, who's been playing a part-time role as a first basemen, will likely get some extended playing time at third in Arenado's absence. McMahon, who's looked vulnerable to inside fastballs and off-speed pitches down and away, could use some more at-bats. He's currently batting .059, with one hit in 17 at-bats with nine strikeouts.

### **Five takeaways from Colorado's 5-1 victory over the Nationals Thursday night:**

**No. 1.** Second baseman **DJ LeMahieu** continues to prove he's one of baseball's most underrated players — at least from a national perspective. The former National League batting champion became the third player in Rockies history to record at least two doubles and two home runs in the same game. The others were **Corey Dickerson** (May 10, 2014 at Cincinnati) and Todd Walker (June 25, 2011 vs. the Padres).

**No. 2.** **Chad Bettis** was clearly pleased with his effort Thursday night. He should have been. It marked just the seventh time of his career in which he pitched at least seven innings and allowed one earned run or fewer.

**No. 3.** Washington still loves Ian Desmond. The Nationals' former shortstop, who started in center field for the Rockies Thursday night, got a warm ovation from the fans. Desmond's 927 games played with the Nationals are the second-most in franchise history.

**No. 4.** Arenado still doesn't think the Rockies' offense is humming. That was certainly true Thursday night when the Rockies batted 0-for-11 with runners in scoring position.



**No. 5. Trevor Story** has shown flashes of power in the early going, but he continues to struggle in key situations. He went 0-for-5 with four strikeouts from the cleanup spot Thursday and is now batting .192 with 20 strikeouts in 52 at-bats. That's an ugly 38 percent.

**Quotable:** "The key for Chad, is that the arm speed and the hand speed was the same on all pitches, and you could see that the Nationals were thrown off their timing." — Manager Bud Black after Bettis' performance Thursday night.

## Rockies 5, Nationals 1: DJ LeMahieu, Chad Bettis team up to take down Washington

Colorado turns in a complete performance

Adam Peterson / Purple Row | Apr. 12, 2018

**Charlie Blackmon** was missing from the lineup yet again but the Rockies still managed enough runs to take down the **Washington Nationals** in the series opener in DC. **DJ LeMahieu**, hitting in Chuck's customary lead off spot, hit two home runs off **Gio Gonzalez** and drove in four runs total on the night and **Chad Bettis** gave seven strong innings to power the Rockies to a 5-1 victory.

### Leadoff Magic

The Rockies offense has been struggling this season. Without MVP-candidate Charlie Blackmon at the top of the order it's been even rougher sledding. With Charlie still nursing a hamstring injury, DJ LeMahieu took the leadoff spot and did his best Charlie Blackmon impression (sans beard). He hit a leadoff home run in the top of the first (the first such home run of his career), hit an RBI double in the fourth, added another two-run blast in the sixth, and another double in the ninth. If you're counting, you'll realize that makes DJ responsible for four of the five Rockies runs. Overall he was 4-for-5 with two doubles, two home runs, and four RBI on the night, perhaps his best offensive game in his career.

Who knows, maybe when Charlie returns Bud Black will move DJ to the top and Charlie to the three-spot.

### Good Chettis

Not to be outdone, Chad Bettis turned in yet another great start. He went seven innings and allowed just one run on three hits with two walks and five strikeouts—two of those were against **Bryce Harper**, and if you know how he's been hitting this season you know how much of an accomplishment that truly is. Chad was efficient as well, throwing less than 70 pitches through five innings and 94 total. He's been the most consistent member of the rotation thus far in 2018 and now owns a 2.04 ERA through  $17\frac{2}{3}$  innings.

### Looking Ahead

The Rockies play the second of their four-game series against the Nationals on Friday, first pitch 5:05pm MT. **Kyle Freeland** looks to bounce back from a rough start against **Tanner Roark** of the Nats.

## **With emotion from earlier brawl lingering, Rockies come together to thwart Nationals**

**Nick Groke / The Athletic | Apr. 13, 2018**

WASHINGTON — The first pitch that came toward DJ LeMahieu on Thursday night cast through the zone for a strike, but it did not trigger an uproar. Not yet. The Rockies' veteran second baseman is a hushed presence, and he works more in deeds than declarations.

A day earlier, a pitch that sailed behind Nolan Arenado's back in the third inning in Denver sent fists flying and caused a benches-clearing brawl. Arenado's rage was understood. He was furious. But nobody in Colorado's clubhouse could more broadly say what the fight meant. Nobody wanted to admit that maybe a fight is exactly what the Rockies needed.

But LeMahieu knew. The mild-mannered All-Star saw a call to action.

"Everyone stopped thinking about themselves and how they were doing and said, 'We need to go as a team,'" he said.

The third pitch LeMahieu saw Thursday in the Rockies' 5-1 victory over the host Nationals was his response, a solo home run to left field off Washington lefty Gio Gonzalez to lead off Colorado's seven-game East Coast road trip.

LeMahieu homered again in the sixth, his fourth this season, a two-run loop to center field, and he doubled twice, a run-scorer to center in the second and again in the eighth. His four hits and four RBIs tied career-high marks. He didn't hit his fourth home run last season until July 7.

This was the second Rockies' furor in as many days.

"It does carry over," LeMahieu said. "Our focus was a lot better. Guys were scuffling here and there. We hadn't clicked a whole lot."

Veteran right-hander Chad Bettis, whose seven-inning effort was perhaps the best-pitched game of the season for Colorado, was similarly lifted. He struck out Nationals slugger Bryce Harper twice, attacking him aggressively inside with 90-mph fastballs and a variety of breaking pitches.

Gerardo Parra, who punched San Diego catcher A.J. Ellis in Wednesday's melee at Coors Field and is awaiting punishment from Major League Baseball, singled twice and scored twice. And the Rockies, on nine hits, earned just a second victory in five games.

The Rockies are forced to wait for pending suspensions to Arenado, Parra and pitcher German Marquez. But, for now, the brouhaha is paying off.

"Any time that happens, there is a surge of emotion," Colorado manager Bud Black said. "At times it can be palpable."

MLB on Thursday announced a six-game penalty for Red Sox pitcher Joe Kelly and five games for Yankees infielder Tyler Austin for a benches-clearing brawl in Boston on Wednesday. Suspensions are surely coming for the Rockies.

But Arenado's punishment might mirror the one MLB gave Harper last season after he charged Giants reliever Hunter Strickland in San Francisco in May. Joe Torre, MLB's chief baseball officer, initially dinged Harper for four games, then reduced it to three on appeal.

"I was protecting myself," Arenado said. "That's how I see it. I know Joe Torre might see it differently. But I really have no idea."

Charlie Blackmon on Thursday missed a third consecutive game with a right quad strain. Blackmon is Colorado's second-best hitter, the defending National League batting champ, and he has already hit four homers in 10 games. Between his injury and Arenado's pending absence, the Rockies are hobbling themselves with missing stars.

"We didn't know where the momentum was," Arenado said.

They needed some juice. Even if it came at a cost.

"What you try to do as a team is have that emotion all the time, even if it's not outwardly shown," Black said. "There is a vibe to each and every team. We try to keep that level of competitiveness at a high level every day. You shouldn't have to rely on moments like that to get a charge. But there is a surge when that happens."

Bettis said he was tired of waiting. Now 2-0 with a 2.04 ERA over three starts, he faced the minimum number of batters the first time through Washington's order. He erased a Matt Adams single to left field in the second by forcing Howie Kendrick into a double play grounder to short. Kendrick's two-out, solo homer in the fifth accounted for the Nationals' only run.

Colorado's offense continued to struggle, going 0-for-11 with runners in scoring position, and Trevor Story struck out three times. But the carryover from one wild afternoon of punches carried them.

"It spark-plugged us," Bettis said. "We've got our foot in the door enough to begin the season and now it's time to go."

## Colorado Rockies: The Rockies on their win against the Nationals

Noah Yingling / RoxPile | Apr. 13, 2018

**Chad Bettis** started the game on Thursday for the Rockies against the Nationals and the Rockies won by a score of 5-1.

Bettis went seven innings, only allowing three hits, one run (that was earned), two walks, and five strikeouts.

Rockies manager **Bud Black** talked about his starter's performance with the media, including our own Kevin Henry, and how it was from a by-gone era.

"[He's like] a pitcher who pitched in my era," said Black, who pitched in parts of 15 seasons from 1981 through 1995 with five different teams and in an era where the average fastball was in the 80s for a fastball.

"In my era, you saw a lot more pitchers who really had to change speeds and move the ball around...there wasn't overpowering velocity and stuff that you see now."

Black went on to say that pitchers had to mess up hitter's timing and change location so that it would miss bats. Bettis talked to the media as well, including our own Kevin Henry, and he said that he liked the way that Black described it and he was flattered by it.

"It's nice to be referred as that...I don't have the 95 or 97 [mile per hour] fastball anymore, so you have to work around that. Command is a big part of my game and tonight it was good."

Most of his pitches were under 90 miles per hour yesterday as, in the first inning, when he retired the Nationals in order, only one of 15 pitches hit 90 MPH...and it was 90.6. Total, only 18 of his 94 pitches, or 19.15 percent, were above 90 miles per hour and none of them were higher than 91.

**DJ LeMahieu** also had a great day as he went 4-for-5 with two runs, four RBI, a double, and two home runs. He talked about his performance after the game.

"I feel like I've seen **Nolan Arenado** and **Charlie Blackmon** and **Carlos Gonzalez** have those kind of games plenty of times. So, it was good to have one those for sure," LeMahieu said. (h/t **Joshua Needleman of MLB.com**)

Bud Black pretty much said it all about what LeMahieu meant for the Rockies yesterday.

"You could say that he was our offense," Black said. (h/t Needleman)

LeMahieu also went 3-for-5 with a double in the series finale against the Padres in a game that was an interesting one for the Rockies and Padres both.

The suspensions from the melee from that game will probably come down some time today or tomorrow so be sure to check back here for updates on the situation as well as the rest of the series in Washington and in Pittsburgh as we will have coverage from Pittsburgh as well.

## Colorado Rockies: The Forbes rankings on how much they are worth

Yesterday, in this article in Forbes, they evaluated all 30 MLB teams and how much they are worth as of this season

Noah Yingling / RoxPile | Apr. 12, 2018

The Colorado Rockies were featured as a part of the 30 MLB teams rankings of how much the entire franchise is worth.

The Rockies were ranked 23rd among the 30 teams as they were valued at \$1.1 billion, which is up 10 percent from last year, when they were valued at \$1 billion. Their rank, at 23rd overall, did not change from 2017 to 2018.

It should be no shocker that the New York Yankees, Los Angeles Dodgers, and Chicago Cubs as being the most valuable as they are valued at \$4 billion, \$3 billion, and \$2.9 billion.

Also, one notable difference between this year and last year was that there were seven teams (the Kansas City Royals, Miami Marlins, Milwaukee Brewers, Cleveland Indians, Cincinnati Reds, Oakland A's, and Tampa Bay Rays) that were valued under \$1 billion. Entering this year, only the Tampa Bay Rays are valued under \$1 billion.

Here are other teams that are in the top 10.

| Rank | Team                         | Current Value | 1-Yr Value Change | Debt/Value | Revenue | Operating Income |
|------|------------------------------|---------------|-------------------|------------|---------|------------------|
| #1   | <b>New York Yankees</b>      | \$4 B         | 8%                | 0%         | \$619 M | \$14 M           |
| #2   | <b>Los Angeles Dodgers</b>   | \$3 B         | 9%                | 14%        | \$522 M | \$68 M           |
| #3   | <b>Chicago Cubs</b>          | \$2.9 B       | 8%                | 15%        | \$457 M | \$102 M          |
| #4   | <b>San Francisco Giants</b>  | \$2.85 B      | 8%                | 0%         | \$445 M | \$84 M           |
| #5   | <b>Boston Red Sox</b>        | \$2.8 B       | 4%                | 0%         | \$453 M | \$86 M           |
| #6   | <b>New York Mets</b>         | \$2.1 B       | 5%                | 14%        | \$336 M | \$17 M           |
| #7   | <b>St Louis Cardinals</b>    | \$1.9 B       | 6%                | 12%        | \$319 M | \$40 M           |
| #8   | <b>Los Angeles Angels</b>    | \$1.8 B       | 3%                | 0%         | \$334 M | \$25 M           |
| #9   | <b>Philadelphia Phillies</b> | \$1.7 B       | 3%                | 5%         | \$329 M | \$91 M           |
| #10  | <b>Washington Nationals</b>  | \$1.675 B     | 5%                | 20%        | \$311 M | \$11 M           |

It should also be noted that the Rockies were only among a handful of teams that saw a 10 percent increase or more.

Here are the highest percentages of increase.

1. Oakland Athletics, 16 percent
2. Cleveland Indians, 14 percent
3. Houston Astros, 14 percent

4. San Diego Padres, 13 percent
5. Minnesota Twins, 12 percent
6. Milwaukee Brewers, 11 percent
7. Chicago White Sox, 11 percent
8. Cincinnati Reds, 10 percent
9. Colorado Rockies, 10 percent

Even though, the Rockies are still in the bottom third of teams, it is nice to see them in the top third of teams in growth.

That's something that I would expect to keep seeing in the next few years.



### **Colorado Rockies: LeMahieu shows his power, win 5-1 over Nationals**

The Colorado Rockies broke a three-game losing streak after tempers flared between the Rockies and Padres at Coors Field, Wednesday afternoon. Some of that fiery passion seemed to carry over this evening, as the Colorado Rockies beat the Washington Nationals 5-1 to set the tone for their seven game road trip...

**Christian Espinoza / RoxPile | Apr. 12, 2018**

**DJ LeMahieu** came off a three hit game Wednesday versus San Diego. He didn't waste any time getting right back to where he left off. LeMahieu produced some instant offense in the absence of the injured **Charlie Blackmon** by hitting a 394 foot home run to lead off the game. The first lead off home run of his career. During the top of the second inning, LeMahieu doubled to right field to drive in **Gerardo Parra** putting the Rockies up 3 to 0.

With the Nationals' **Matt Grace** pitching in relief, Parra *once again* set the table by singling to right-center... and DJ LeMahieu *once again* hit a home run to drive him in. That home run put the Rockies up 5-1 after top of the sixth inning. This would be LeMahieu's second multi-home run game of his career. Tonight's 4 Hit, 4 RBI performance by DJ was good for his seventh multi-hit game of the season, as well.

Much like the Colorado Rockies, the Washington Nationals have had a pretty mediocre start to the season given the expectations of the team in 2018. Except for the always great **Bryce Harper**, the Nats have battled with a mix of poor clutch hitting, weird base running errors, and a few injuries. The only consistency they've had so far this season is their pitching with **Max Scherzer**, **Stephen Strasburg**, and tonight's starter **Gio Gonzalez** having sub-3.00 ERAs.

Gonzalez just wasn't good enough this evening, though. The Rockies battled Gonzalez by stringing together tough at-bats. Despite having 5 strikeouts after the top of the third inning, Gio Gonzalez had racked up 73 pitches...not exactly the most efficient evening for Gonzalez. He finished with 106 pitches through 5 innings allowing 3 runs (2 earned), 3 walks, and 7 strikeouts, raising his ERA to 2.20.

Colorado Rockies' shortstop **Trevor Story** started to seem like he found a little momentum after a rough start to his 2018 campaign. Story had reached base safely in 10 consecutive games before tonight. However, he's still not quite there. He spent the evening chasing fastballs out of the zone, striking out four times and leaving five runners on base. As I wrote a few weeks back, there will be plenty of time for Story to bounce back from that rough start though.

On the flip side, **Chad Bettis** had a terrific night on the mound. After the 'bend not break' outing in his last start against the Padres, the Lubbock, Texas native's stuff was on point against potentially lethal group of hitters. In the bottom of the 4th, Bettis struck out Harper by attacking him an A+ change-up... which seemed to be his go-to pitch all night.

The Nationals looked to get things going after **Howie Kendrick** hit a two-out home run off Bettis. Chad did get a little squirrely after that by walking **Matt Wieters**, and giving up a double to **Moisés Sierra**. The Rockies starter got out of the inning by inducing a ground out from **Michael Taylor** to end the fifth inning.

Chad Bettis finished his night with 7 innings pitched, 1 earned run, 2 walks, and 5 strikeouts. Chad improves to 2-0 on the season with a 2.04 ERA. This was the first time Chad has pitched beyond the 6 inning this season. Also, it was the second longest outing by any Rockies starter this season, as well.

The Rockies bullpen only had to get the last six outs of the game to seal the win for Chad Bettis. They did exactly that. **Bryan Shaw**, who recorded his 400th major league strikeout on Monday against San Diego, came in relief in the bottom of the 8th inning. Shaw took down the Nationals, only allowing a single by Michael Taylor. **Jake McGee** was the next arm from the relief corps to come into the game, who got the heart of Nationals out in order to finish the game.

Your Colorado Rockies look to keep up their winning ways by sending lefty, **Kyle Freeland**, to the mound to face off against the Washington Nationals' right-handed starter, **Tanner Roark**. Game time is at 5:05pm Mountain Time.

## Colorado Rockies: Day after brawl, Nolan Arenado discusses next steps

Kevin Henry / RoxPile | Apr. 13, 2018

WASHINGTON, D.C. — One day after a brawl that stole the headlines on a sunny Wednesday afternoon at Coors Field, Colorado Rockies All-Star third baseman **Nolan Arenado** knows a suspension is likely coming, so he's focusing on what he can do at the plate on Thursday night against the Washington Nationals.

Arenado charged the mound in the third inning of Colorado's 6-4 win over the San Diego Padres on Wednesday after Padres starting pitcher **Luis Perdomo** threw a fastball behind Arenado, culminating a series of pitches with intentions that had been building throughout the series.

Both Arenado and Colorado manager **Bud Black** said the Major League Baseball office has not yet given an indication of what (if any) suspensions will be handed down. However, Arenado said again on Thursday he does expect something to come his way from the MLB office.

"I mean, I would guess, right?" Arenado told Rox Pile and other media members inside the Rockies clubhouse. "The times when you have seen fights, there have always been suspensions after them. I figure something probably will be happening, but when it comes, we will see."

Arenado didn't want to get into the specifics of the brawl but said he was glad it was in the past.

"A pretty bad situation. Not much to say," Arenado said. "It got a little sticky and a little weird there. I'm happy we won. That's the most important thing. We went out of there with a win. It's over with. I don't know what will happen, but I'm more worried about the Nationals now.

"I was protecting myself. That's how I see it."

The focus on the Nationals begins on Thursday night, and Arenado doesn't know how many of the four games in the nation's capital or the following three-game series in Pittsburgh he will be available for. Whenever a potential suspension does come down, Arenado said he will hate missing the games and not being able to contribute to the Rockies lineup.

"If I had that mindset going into that at-bat, maybe I wouldn't have ran out there knowing I was going to miss games but that's just not how baseball works," Arenado said. "Obviously I don't want to miss any time. When I find out how long it's going to be, we're going to have to figure out what we're going to do."

Arenado enters Thursday night's game in Washington with a .311/.396/.489 slash line. Included in those numbers are three doubles, a triple and a homer. Arenado is one of three batters (**DJ LeMahieu** and **Chris Iannetta** join him) at the top of the Colorado lineup on Thursday night hitting over .300. After that, four of the next five batters are hitting .213 or lower.

Can Colorado's momentum from Wednesday's brawl carry over to the road trip? Arenado thinks it will take more than just that to kickstart the Colorado offense.

"The quality at-bats need to be better for everyone. Me, everyone," Arenado said. "We need to have better approaches and I think we will. We have too many good hitters for it not to happen."

## LeMahieu homers twice to lead Rockies to 5-1 win over Nats

The Associated Press | Apr. 13, 2018

WASHINGTON (AP) — DJ LeMahieu carried the Colorado Rockies' offense on Thursday.

The second baseman homered twice, added two doubles and drove in a career-high four runs and Colorado earned a 5-1 victory over the Washington Nationals.

"I was just trying to get on base and hit the ball hard," said LeMahieu, who matched a career high with four hits.

"I feel like I've seen Nolan (Arenado) and Charlie (Blackmon) and CarGo (Carlos Gonzalez) have those kind of games plenty of times. It feels good to have one of those."

Chad Bettis (2-0) allowed one run and three hits over seven innings as Colorado took the opener of a four-game series.

Which player was the better Colorado Rockies starting pitcher?

It was the second career multi-homer game for LeMahieu, who hit two last season at Atlanta on Aug. 26. The second baseman has four homers on the season, already halfway to his season total from a year ago, and his seven multi-hit games rank behind only San Diego first baseman Eric Hosmer's eight in the National League.

"You can say he was our offense," manager Bud Black said.

He got started quickly when he sent Washington starter Gio Gonzalez's third pitch into the Colorado bullpen in left.

The Rockies managed another run in the first when Washington second baseman Howie Kendrick misplayed Ian Desmond's two-out pop up and allowed Chris Iannetta to score from second.

LeMahieu added an RBI double in the second off Gonzalez (1-1). In the sixth, he smacked a two-run homer to left-center off reliever Matt Grace to make it 5-1.

He became the third player in franchise history to hit two homers and two doubles in a game, joining Todd Walker (June 25, 2001) and Corey Dickerson (May 10, 2014), and is 7 for 10 over the past two games.

"Overall, I've felt good pretty much all season, but the last couple days I've been seeing the ball pretty good," LeMahieu said.

Kendrick's home run in the fifth was his first of the season and extended his hitting streak to 10 games. But that was all the offense Washington could muster against Bettis, who moved the ball effectively throughout his outing.

"He mixed it up really well," Kendrick said. "We hit some balls hard, it was just right at their guys and they had a little more offense than we did tonight, I think that's what it comes down to."

Washington had a season-low four hits, and the Nationals have scored just 20 runs in their past eight games.

“We have a good hitting team, so we’ve just got to stay aggressive and work our way out of it,” Washington manager Dave Martinez said.

Gonzalez allowed five hits and three runs in five innings, losing for the first time in six career starts against Colorado.

#### WIETERS RETURNS

Washington C Matt Wieters was 0 for 2 with a walk in his first game since coming off the disabled list Wednesday. Wieters had played in only two games before a left oblique strain sidelined him for 10 days.

#### TRAINER’S ROOM

Rockies: Blackmon was out of the lineup for the third consecutive game with right quad tightness. “He’s improving,” Black said. “Hopefully in the next couple days we’ll get him out there.”

Nationals: Martinez said RHP Koda Glover, on the 60-day disabled list with shoulder tendinitis, is throwing from 75 feet.

#### UP NEXT

Rockies: LHP Kyle Freeland (0-2, 5.56 ERA) has allowed two home runs in both of his first two starts this season.

Nationals: RHP Tanner Roark (1-0, 4.50 ERA) has struck out 14 in 11 career innings against Colorado.